

HABS
WYO,
11-CHEY,
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City and County Building
19th & Carey Avenue
Cheyenne
Laramie County
Wyoming

HABS No. WY-73

P H O T O G R A P H S

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

NAME: City and County Building or City/County Building

PRESENT NAME: County Court House

LOCATION: 19th and Carey Avenue
Cheyenne, Laramie County,
Wyoming 82001

PRESENT OWNER - PRESENT OCCUPANT - PRESENT USE:

The present owner, occupant and user is the Laramie
County Government

SIGNIFICANCE:

The City/County Building, completed in 1919, is significant for its historic associations with the development and cooperation of the City of Cheyenne and Laramie County Governments. The building is a fine example of the Classic Revival Style, and is significant for the quality of its craftsmanship and detailing.

The building also serves as a repository of Laramie County documents. More than 52,000 civil, probate and criminal court records have been filed at the Laramie County District Court, some of which are more than one hundred years old. Several water rights cases relating to Crow Creek, Little Horse Creek, and others, have been filed in the court. The laws which were established in these cases during the early part the century are still in effect and many times they are referred to as exhibits in current cases.

PART I - HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. CONSTRUCTION

1. Date of Erection

The construction of the building was begun in 1917, and completed in 1919.

2. Architect - William R. Dubois

William R. Dubois was born in Chicago, Illinois on November 15th, 1879. He was schooled in architecture and studied in Omaha, Nebraska, in addition to his native Chicago.

For a time, he lived in Arizona, and while working for an architectural firm there, he was asked to be the supervising architect for the construction of the Carnegie Library in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He came to Cheyenne in 1902, and spent the rest of his life here. He was married in 1904 to Dora Slack, who was the granddaughter of Esther Hobart Morris, mother of women's suffrage in Wyoming, and the first woman judge in the modern world.

Dubois was an outstanding pianist and organist, and gave many recitals and concerts. He also served in the Wyoming State Legislature.

In addition to being the architect for the City and County Building, many other buildings still stand in Cheyenne which vividly reflect Dubois' work. Among them are the wings of the Wyoming State Capitol, the Supreme Court Building, the Atlas Theatre, the Majestic Building, the Bishop's Mansion, the Emerson Building, the school district's Administration Building (formerly Central High School), Johnson Jr. High School, Churchill School, the Plains Hotel, the IRS Federal Building, the Elks Club, the Lincoln Theatre, Griers Furniture, Telesonic Building, part of the Boyd Building, and the Hynds Building, as well as many residential homes in Cheyenne.

3. Builder, Contractor, Supplier - John W. Howard
- 4/5. Original Plans and Construction - Alterations and Additions

The building is a rectangular structure of composite construction, and has not been altered since it was built. An annex was added to the building in 1957 at the southwest corner to meet the needs for additional County Government office space. The interior of the building remains in its original state, although several interior walls have been relocated to provide greater administrative efficiency. All work done to the building since its construction has been minor and cosmetic, and has not disrupted the original charm and architectural flavor.

B. HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

Originally the City of Cheyenne and Laramie County had separate administrative buildings, known as the City Hall and the Courthouse, respectively. The idea of combining the two buildings into one to reduce maintenance expenditures occurred to Mr. Warren Richardson, who was Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners. The County and City officials met in November, 1914, to consider this proposition and it was agreed that a building should be built. Construction of the City and County Building was begun in 1917 and completed in 1919. The building has housed fourteen county and six city offices, along with the courts for each level of local government. Additionally, at one time the United States Internal Revenue Service and Prohibition offices were also located there. Currently, the building houses most of the county administration offices. The county and district courts are also located in the building.

PART II - ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE EXTERIOR

The City-County Building is a four story rectangular building of composite construction. Materials used in the construction of the building include concrete, brick, stone, marble and steel. Most of the construction materials came from Wyoming and Colorado. However, the stone came from Bedford, Indiana, and the marble from Salt Lake City, Utah. The building is eighty-one feet wide by one hundred twenty-seven feet long.

The architectural style of the building is Classic Revival. Typical of this style, the building incorporates a rusticated limestone base and arched first floor windows in relief. Brick veneer is used from the top of the base to the roof line. Some features of the building are pediments at the entrances and twelve Ionic columns - eight on the south facade, four on the east. Characteristic of these columns are distinct bases; capitals with large volutes; slender shafts with slight tapers; and a smooth, plain finish. The roof of the building is flat and of reinforced slab construction.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERIOR

The interior of the building is in excellent condition. Stairways are of iron and steel, and railings are of ornamental wrought iron with wood handrails. Marble work consists of wainscoting along entrances, first, second and ground floor corridors, in the courtrooms, and the plinths of door casings. All wainscotings have a dark Tennessee base and white, Italian dado and cap. The overall height of the wainscoting is four and one-half feet.

Certainly the most beautiful room in the building is the Laramie County District Courtroom. Located on the

third floor, the spacious room has decorative columns on the interior side walls. The columns are of the Doric order, characterized by fluted shafts and distinct bases, as well as capitals. The three lights in the ceiling of the courtroom are glazed with beautiful art glass. The middle ceiling light bears the great seal of the State of Wyoming. Most of the original lighting fixtures in the room are still functional.

Several minor cosmetic changes have been made to the interior of the building during remodeling in 1979 and 1980, after the County became the sole owner of the structure. The old city steam heating system has been replaced by a modern baseboard radiant hot water system.

C. SITE

The building faces south on 19th Street, and Carey Avenue is at the east entrance to the building. The building is located on approximately one-half block. As a result, only a limited amount of space is available for landscaping.

PART III - SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The information presented above, is based on the National Register of Historic Places Nomination for the City-County Building, dated May 5th, 1978, and prepared by Mr. Punda Pai with the following references:

A. BOOKS

Larson, T. A. History of Wyoming
University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1965

B. BOOKLETS, PAMPHLETS

Dubois, William Specifications of Materials and Labor Required for the Construction and Completion of a City-County Building at Cheyenne, Wyoming

Available at City-County Building, Cheyenne, Wyoming

Hansen, Lois Batalden A Brief History of Cheyenne, Wyoming

The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Wyoming

A Survey of Wyoming County Court-houses - Their History, Architecture, Documents, Proceedings and Personnel

No publisher listed, 1972

Wyoming State Historical Society - Laramie County Chapter

Cheyenne Landmarks - A Pictorial Essay of Interesting Buildings in Cheyenne

Pioneer Printing & Stationery Co. 1976

C. INTERVIEWS:

Pat Creech by Punda Pai March, 1978

Byron Hirst by Punda Pai March, 1978

D. NEWSPAPERS:

Wyoming State Tribune & Cheyenne State Leader pp. 12

May 7th, 1922 "City-County Building"

Wyoming State Tribune, Cheyenne, Wyoming

pp. 1

May 8th, 1944

"Bruce Jones named acting Mayor: Four officials
connected on bribe charges: Group being held in
county jail; bonds not posted"

D. MISCELLANEOUS:

"Architect's Drawings - City-County Building"

Laramie County Engineer's Office
Cheyenne, Wyoming

"Vertical Files - Laramie County Clerk"

Laramie County Clerk's Office
Cheyenne, Wyoming

"Vertical Files"

Wyoming State Historical Department
Cheyenne, Wyoming

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